Academic Library as Place: Users and Uses

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University of Washington Libraries

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University of Haifa Library

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Academic Research Library Use Trends

• On-site use indicators are down (in North America)
  – Library collections
  – Library services such as reference
• Remote use indicators are up
  – Information resource access & delivery
  – Service delivery
• Library entrance counts remain stable

Questions
• Who is coming to the physical library and what are they doing there?
• Is library as place still important to the academic community?
Potential Data Sources on Library as Place

• **Surveys and statistics**
  – Entrance/gate counts
  – General user surveys
  – In-Library use survey
  – Reference/instruction stats
  – Collections use stats
  – Photocopies/prints stats
  – Facility data (seats, carpet, noise levels, lighting)

• **Qualitative information**
  – Focus groups
  – Interviews
  – Usability/wayfinding
  – Observation
  – User centered design
  – Comments/complaints
**Reasons for Running In-Library Use Survey**

**Washington**
- Correlate w/user demographics
- Activities in the library
- Importance and satisfaction with services
- New or improved services wanted by users
- Comments
- Use trends over time
- Corroborate other data

**Haifa**
- Map user activities
- Services used
- Sections of library visited
- Input on current and future library services (new wing under construction)
- Comments & suggestions about library resources and services
- Baseline data

**Improve library services & contributions to user success!**
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington USA

Comprehensive research university
- 27,000 undergraduate students
- 12,000 graduate and professional students (80 doctoral programs)
- 4,000 research & teaching faculty
- Strong in science & health sciences
- $1.1 billion in sponsored research
- 16th in ARWU world rankings

Large library system
- $40 million annual budget (2008)
- 15 libraries (as of 2008)
  - 3 large and 12 smaller libraries
- 4.3 million visits (2008)
University of Haifa
Haifa, Israel

Comprehensive university
• 10,000 undergraduate students
• 6,500 graduate and professional students (24 doctoral programs)
• 1,200 research & teaching faculty
  Strong in humanities & social sciences
• $.013 billion in sponsored research

One central library
• $4.7 million budget
• Known for high quality user services
• Large English language collection
Library Assessment at Universities of Washington and Haifa

**Washington**
- Large scale user surveys every 3 years since 1992
- In-Library Use surveys every 3 years beginning 2002
- Focus groups/interviews
- Observation (guided and non-obtrusive)
- Usability/wayfinding
- Usage statistics/data mining
- Balanced scorecard (2009-)


**Haifa**
- LibQUAL+® (2009-)
- Focus groups/interviews
- In-Library Use survey (2008-)
- Focus groups/interviews
- Usability/Wayfinding
- Usage statistics/data mining
- Reference feedback mini-survey
In-Library Use Survey

• One page survey handed out to users as they enter library during a specified two hour time block. Users complete and return survey as they exit library.

• 2008 Survey questions
  – What did you do in this library today
  – How often do you use this library
  – How important are these services to you
  – How would you rate the library on services/environment
  – Demographics (group, academic program)
  – Specific locations visited within the library (large libraries)
Survey Distribution

**Washington**
- 3 two hour sampling slots during a 4 week period in May 2008 at all 15 libraries
- Additional 2 sampling sessions at 12 smaller libraries
- 57% response rate
- Survey forms, results, and charts available at:

**Haifa**
- 10 two hour sampling slots during a 2 week period in July 2008
- 62% response rate
- Survey form, results and charts available in Hebrew on Library Assessment site at:
  [http://lib.haifa.ac.il/assessment/](http://lib.haifa.ac.il/assessment/)
## Number of Respondents and Group Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Washington (3 sessions in common)</th>
<th>Haifa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Undergraduates</strong></td>
<td>2210</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate students</strong></td>
<td>640</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty – Staff</strong></td>
<td>166</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-affiliated</strong></td>
<td>154</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Did not state/other</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total # respondents</strong></td>
<td>3196</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Student Respondents by Academic Program Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergraduates</th>
<th>Graduate students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Haifa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2210</td>
<td>n=418</td>
<td>n=640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts-Humanities</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science-Engineering</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary/other/</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none given</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


What Did You Do In the Library Today?

- Staff assistance
- Looked for material
- Photocopied
- Work alone
- Work in groups
- Use library computer
- Use own computer

Washington
Haifa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Washington</th>
<th>Haifa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff assistance</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looked for material</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopied</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work alone</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in groups</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use library computer</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use own computer</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Does Use Vary by Academic Program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Washington Undergraduates</th>
<th>Haifa Undergraduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask for assistance</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look for material</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use library computer</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work alone</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in groups</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compare Groups Over Time
UW Look for Material 2002-08

- Faculty
- Grad
- Undergrad

10%  20%  30%  40%  50%  60%

2002  2005  2008
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microbiology</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Drilling Down by Discipline: UW Biology Undergrads

Libraries Used by Biology Undergrads (n=122)

- Main: 40%
- Undergrad: 33%
- Health Sci: 10%
- Other Sci: 9%
- Chem: 7%
- Other: 10%

What Biology Undergrads Did in the Library

- Use own computer: 10%
- Use lib computer: 63%
- Group work: 13%
- Work alone: 74%
- Lib Material: 10%
- Help: 4%
How Important Are The Following Services? Scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Washington</th>
<th>Haifa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library computers</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff assistance</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site collections</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place to work alone</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place to work in groups</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers with software</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Washington
- Haifa
Compare Libraries: Importance of On-Site Services for Grad Students in Two Large UW Libraries

- Library Computers
- Staff assistance
- On-Site Collections
- Access to online resources
- Work individually
- Work in groups

Health Sciences (169) vs. Suzzallo-Allen (189)
Compare Groups: Importance of On-Site Services for Haifa Undergraduates and Grad Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Undergrads</th>
<th>Grad Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Computers</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff assistance</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to onsite collections</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work individually</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in groups</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Would You Rate This Library on the Following?  Scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent)

- Computer access
- Individual work space
- Group work space
- Collection quality
- Service quality
- Hours open

Washington: 4.25
Haifa: 4.50

- Washington: 4.00
- Haifa: 3.75

- Washington: 3.75
- Haifa: 3.50

- Washington: 3.50
- Haifa: 3.25

- Washington: 3.25
- Haifa: 3.00

- Washington: 3.00
- Haifa: 2.75

- Washington: 2.75
- Haifa: 2.50

- Washington: 2.50
- Haifa: 2.50

- Washington: 2.50
- Haifa: 2.50
# Comments by Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment Type</th>
<th>Washington 50% of surveys with comments</th>
<th>Haifa 40% of surveys with comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilities-related</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer-related</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of opening</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collections (print &amp; online)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access services</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other equipment</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is so great about Suzzallo is that it is so much quieter and less busy than Undergrad. I use the library mainly for studying and I almost always use online resources because I'm not sure where to find books here. I'm sure staff here would help me, but I often rather use a crappy article that "kinda works" from online than go to the hassle of finding a book in the library.

Psychology undergraduate

- My experience in the library is usually very good. The staff are very professional and always willing to help. The collection is excellent and so is the ILL service

Haifa

- Sometimes if I can’t find material on my subject I give up

Arabic and French Literature undergraduate
Results Summary

Washington

- Confirmed long-term decline in use of print collections and mediated services
- Libraries are primarily work places for undergraduates
- Library computers still important but more bringing own computing devices
- Diversified and specialized spaces are important

Haifa

- Users viewed library positively
- Results confirmed the “library as place” for students to work, seek assistance, borrow books and photocopy articles
- Comments provided specific issues and concerns that library is addressing
Selected UW Actions

• Library renovation and refurbishment in high use libraries, especially undergraduate and health sciences
• Continue replacement and upgrade of library computers
• Close and consolidate libraries and service points
• Renovation proposals for more electrical outlets
• Provide more services online
• Better directional signage
• Reduce amount of stack space
Selected Haifa Actions

• Provide space for group work,
• Reduce noise levels from equipment, staff and other workers
• Add or relocate computers within the library to where they’re needed
• Upgrade library computers
• Better signage for computers and electrical outlets
• Better assistance for users in the stacks through phones and student employees with identifying t-shirts
Conclusions

• The In-Library Use survey can capture information about physical library use and provide actionable data at reasonable cost and effort

• Local conditions and academic programs are important factors in use

• Use of multiple assessment methods provides best picture of library use, user needs, and importance